

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2022
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 6:01 pm

Present: Leah D. Basbanes, chair, Kieran D. Meehan, vice chair, Ronald J. Mikol, member(s); David DeManche, Interim Town Administrator; James W. Dow, Chief of Police; Mike Martin, Roads Commission; Maria Amodei, Board of Health

Call to Order & Public Forum

Ms. Basbanes called the meeting to order. She then went over the agenda which included the Annual Appointments, Extension of the Trinity Ambulance Contract, Discussion Regarding a Proposed Joint Meeting with Groton & DEP Regarding a PFAS issue at Groton-Dunstable Regional High School, a Vote on the Fire Chief Screening Committee, a Vote to Reinstate the Chief of Police, a Determination on the Authorized Signatory for Payments Relating to the Rt. 113 Infrastructure Project Earmark, Discussion Regarding the WRAP Grant & Signatory for Reimbursement, and a Board of Health Request for Placement of Donation Bins for Clothing, Textiles, & Shoes at 160 Pleasant Street.

- Mr. Martin inquired about funding relating to an earmark promised by Rep. Harrington and any leftover funds from the Rt. 113 Infrastructure Project. The Board didn't think there would be any funds left. Mr. Martin recalled the Highway Dept. essentially "loaning" funds and is looking for them back or for any leftover funds. There are several streets that need to be paved and that's what they would seek to use the funds for. They're looking to do High Street, Depot Street, Lowell Street and the northern section of Main Street. Main Street alone would likely be at least \$110,000 for what it needs. Lowell is probably 2 or 3 times that with Depot being even more given its needs. The Board noted that the earmark for the Rt. 113 Infrastructure Project is to pay a specific bill. The Board wasn't aware of there being any leftover funds. Mr. Martin felt that there would be some. Most of it will be eaten up, but he figured around \$20,000 would be left over. The Board had the opposite understanding, that being the bill was actually higher than the earmark. Mr. Martin expressed the belief the town already paid \$50,000, that being the amount from Highway Dept. Which would leave around \$67,000 to his recollection to be paid for from that earmark. Which would leave left over funds. The Board was uncertain as to that being accurate. Obviously research would need to be done. The Board asked what the full BSC Group bill was for. Mr. Martin responded it was for around \$338,000. There was a separate \$20,000, but that was from ARPA sourcing for the add on project relating to water and the proposed loop for Hillcrest and Westford Streets. Mr. Martin then elaborated on the various costs and how that broke down and was paid for. The Board then outlined what actions it has taken. Discussion shifted back to the earmark from Rep. Harrington. Mr. Martin insisted the town had already received that. The Board's response was that this if true would reimburse Highway Dept. The Board directed Mr. DeManche to verify receipt of the funds.

Extension of Trinity Ambulance Contract

Mr. DeManche reported that this is an extension. Since we haven't gone with any other alternatives at this stage such as regionalization or an inter-municipal agreement, we don't have a lot of options. The Board noted in fairness Trinity does a reasonably good job. There are things we'd like to improve, such as response times, but this is worth doing at this time. It was determined the Interim Town Administrator would be signatory for this contract.

A motion was made by Mr. Mikol to authorize the execution of the contract the authorized signatory to be the Interim Town Administrator. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meehan and passed without objection.

Discussion Regarding Proposed Joint Meeting with Groton & DEP to Discuss PFAS Issue at the High School

The Board started by discussing what PFAS is and how it occurs. Ms. Amodei concurred and outlined more information noting this particular problem appears to have resulted from a fire suppressant foam used to put out a fire on an athletic field a number of years ago. Mr. Voelker interjected to note that DEP has also tested wells and found 9 private wells in Dunstable to be contaminated. The High School sits on the boarder of the two towns on the Groton side. DEP would like to hold a joint meeting with both towns. Mr. DeManche provided a letter from Groton's Town Manager and some dates for a joint meeting. He then stressed communication that was done by the town to residents regarding possible testing to determine if there are more contaminated wells. Ms. Amodei noted there was a free testing program that was in place that was about to run dry in funding by the end of the fiscal year. She asked if this testing offered was under that program. Mr. DeManche wasn't certain, but felt it likely that there is funding certain for this or DEP wouldn't be offering it for this situation. The proposed location would be at one of the regional school districts facilities. Possibly

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the Performing Arts Center. The Board asked about specific problems that PFAS cause. Ms. Amodei elaborated on forever chemicals and the types of things they do. The problem is that because it stays in the environment and doesn't break down it is quite dangerous. These chemicals were in fire suppressants until just a few years ago as well as many other consumer products including coating on wrappers for fast food. There was a question about a filtration system. Mr. Voelker recalled that the Superintendent had announced plans for a filtration system to be installed. But whether that would still satisfy DEP at this stage as that was proposed before the private wells were found to be contaminated, is an open question. Mr. DeManche felt DEP will address this. It was agreed to seek May 26th, 2022 as the meeting date.

Vote on Fire Chief Screening Committee

Mr. DeManche went over his recommendation. He recommends a 5 person screening committee. He's consulted with various firefighters, and it is agreed that Patrick Kerrigan and Rafael Cabanas would serve on it. Former Fire Chief Shawn Murray would also serve on it, and current Interim Fire Chief Paul Zbikowski as well. He asked the Board if they would like to have a member on the committee. The Board felt comfortable with Mr. DeManche instead. The Board noted it would be the ultimate appointer as the screening committee will recommend candidates and the Board will select from that resulting pool. The Board stressed that while we do this we should also ensure that we have a contract in place. We can have one, and it makes sense to nail down some things. Mr. DeManche noted that Dunstable really hasn't had a contract for this position, but he felt confident he could get a model contract. The Board felt it important for accountability. There are limits given the strong Chief designation, but certainly a contract can help.

A motion was made by Mr. Meehan to establish an *ad hoc* Fire Chief Screening Committee and to appoint Rafael Cabanas, Shawn Murray, David DeManche, Paul Zbikowski, and Patrick Kerrigan to serve until the position is filled. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed unanimously.

Vote to Reinstate the Chief of Police

The Board noted this is a formality and would be backdated to last Tuesday. The Board asked if all proper protocols were followed. Chief Dow noted they were. He was on sick time originally then on FMLA. Mr. DeManche confirmed we have followed the proper protocols including doctor's notes and FMLA paperwork. Everything followed the Personnel Policy. Mr. DeManche noted that once past the 12 weeks of FMLA the town can ask for an independent analysis by a doctor of its choosing. But this leave didn't reach 12 weeks. Chief Dow emphasized he kept Mr. Palaia abreast of his leave and his medical circumstance and did the same with Mr. DeManche once he started. The Board asked how things have shaken out with Sgt. Hoar who was the Acting Chief of Police. Chief Dow elaborated that he always worked days and his schedule often overlapped with his. So there will be a little adjustment on day shifts, but Sgt. Hoar will settle back into his normal schedule. Meanwhile our 9th full time officer graduates from the Police Academy. The Board was happy with the return of Chief Dow and determined to reinstate him to active duty. Chief Dow thanked the Board and publicly praised Sgt. Hoar for his work noting he truly took care of the town.

A motion was made by Mr. Meehan to formally reinstate Chief Dow and to end the Acting Chief of Police role of Sgt. Hoar. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed unanimously.

Determination on Authorized Signatory for Payments Relating to Rt. 113 Infrastructure Project Earmark

Mr. DeManche reported there are forms from MassDOT. They want a signatory designated and the standard contract form signed. This will release the earmark. He would suggest it be a member of the Board. The Board noted several conceivable exigencies. Mr. DeManche submitted that more than one designated. It was agreed to have the Board's chair be designated and Mr. DeManche as a secondary. The Board didn't feel comfortable designating the chair by name given the fact that its next meeting is after the Annual Town Election and the Board will need to reorganize. So the primary should be Mr. DeManche with the secondary as the Board's chair. It was so agreed.

A motion was made by Mr. Mikol to designate the signatory as the Interim Town Administrator for the MassDOT paperwork with the Board's chair as the secondary signatory authority. A motion was seconded by Mr. Meehan and passed without objection.

Discussion Regarding WRAP Grant & Signatory for Reimbursement

Mr. DeManche reported that we received this grant. It is for \$139,000. Mr. Martin felt confident Highway Dept. could come up with projects for this grant by the deadline articulated in the grant paperwork. The Board was pleased.

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Board of Health Request for Placement of Donation Bins for Clothing, Textiles, & Shoes at 160 Pleasant St.

Ms. Amodei began by elaborating on Board of Health's process. MGL requires us to recycle fabrics. Most people don't know this, but it is the law. You aren't supposed to throw textiles away in the trash. Even torn fabrics can be recycled. There are centers in the region, but their hours are super inconvenient. So the Commonwealth encourages Boards of Health to have these bins. The bins are sponsored by a commercial company, but they do partner with charities. The company provides the service, checks the bins, keeps them tidy and clean, and the like. Board of Health has had these before at the old Transfer Station. But with the Transfer Station closed, there isn't really anywhere to place them aside from Pleasant Street. They don't like to place these in low visibility places because then non qualifying materials like trash end up being worse. Numerous sites were considered including the Post Office and the General Store. But in the end 160 Pleasant Street seemed the best. The Board asked about the towns curbside services and why they can't do pick up for such recycling. Ms. Amodei responded they aren't setup to sort and really none of the curbside companies offer that. Chief Dow asked if the churches bins could count or a partnership could be entered into. The Board agreed with that idea. Ms. Amodei was willing to pursue it, but otherwise 160 Pleasant would really be the best. She stressed that we can trial a location. The Board had concerns about 160 Pleasant Street given its high visibility. Ms. Amodei responded that there will be a contract and there are provisions to say that it isn't working and to allow relocation. The Board asked how fast they would respond to calls for removing things that are dumped inappropriately. Ms. Amodei responded about 2 business days. There was some discussion about Larter Field. It was agreed that would probably not work well. There was then a suggestion about the Library. Ms. Amodei responded it probably wouldn't work out well there either. The Board was open to a trial. The bins could go in this summer and we can see how it goes. The Board's main concern was to avoid the situation that happened at McLoon Farm when Mr. McLoon had bins and it resulted in a significant amount of dumping. Pool ladders and lots of other random things. The Board agreed to a trial, but there has to be an exit. Ms. Amodei felt that was clear and it was agreed Board of Health will discuss with the company that would provide this service at a Board of Health meeting and confirm that we can do a trial run and that there will be an exit option. Assuming it can work, then the Board was agreeable to allowing the bins.

Appointments & Resignations

The Board noted that this is the beginning of the Annual Appointments Season. The Board then went over the list noting that the tradition is to approve the list as presented, or to amend it and then approve as amended. This allows for an omnibus motion rather than individual motions for each appointment. The Board noted to Mr. Voelker and Mr. DeManche that they wanted to see an alternate selected for the Plumbing & Gas Inspector. Otherwise they were comfortable with proceeding.

Annual Appointments 2022 One Year Term

Jakob K. Voelker – ADA Coordinator
Dana Barnes – Building Inspector
Henry Fontaine – Alternate Building Inspector
Dana Barnes – Zoning Enforcement Officer
Henry Fontaine – Alternate Zoning Enforcement Officer
Joseph Dean – Veterans Services Officer
John Cryan – Gas & Plumbing Inspector
Peter Martin – Electrical Inspector
David G. Sweet II – Alternate Electrical Inspector
John Greenhalgh – Animal Control Officer
Jakob K. Voelker – Assistant Treasurer
Jakob K. Voelker – Assistant Tax Collector
Susan Bresnick – Assistant Town Accountant
Kieran Meehan – BOS Designee to Affordable Housing
Alan Starbird – Conservation Commission Designee to CPC
Jon Hughes – Affordable Housing Designee to CPC
Carol Bacon – Historical Commissions Designee to CPC
Jon Hughes – Affordable Housing Committee
Kieran Meehan – BOS Rep. to NMCOG
Matthew Naughton – Advisory's Designee to Affordable Housing

Annual Appointments 2022 One Year Term

Jon Crandall – Emergency Management Director
Jakob K. Voelker – Insurance Advisory Committee
James W. Dow – Insurance Advisory Committee
Eric Hoar – Insurance Advisory Committee

Annual Appointments 2022 Three Year Term

Donald Pottle – Council on Aging
Anne Davis – Historical Commission
Jean Phelan – Parks Commission
Robert Patenaude – Town Forest Committee
Brad Walmslely – ZBA Associate Member
Catherine Irzyk – CPC At-Large Member
Catherine Irzyk – Historical Commission

Annual Appointments 2022 Five Year Term

Leah Basbanes – Conservation Commission
Leo Tometich – ZBA Full Member

A motion was made by Mr. Mikol to approve the list of Annual Appointments as enumerated and dated May 10th, 2022, and to dispense with reading of the list. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meehan and passed without objection.

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Department Payments for Trash & Recycling

Ms. Amodei brought up this unexpected item asking about plans to address the town's expense for trash and recycling. Currently the program as a whole supports the municipal offices and the departments don't pay. It was supposed to be that the departments pay for it or the town provides it in the Board of Health's budget. The program is supporting itself otherwise and growing steadily. The Board noted that there is a dumpster at the Police Station, the Highway Garage, and the Police Dept. Town Hall has bins like a household. There's also a trash bin at Larter Field that's covered as well. Regardless, Ms. Amodei noted that essentially those who subscribe to the service are paying for it. One way or another taxpayers pay whether it's via subscribers who are taxpayers, or via the ordinary budgets of departments. The Board suggested a bill being produced for each department. Chief Dow conceded that the departments used to. He noted currently Fire Station uses the Police Dept.'s dumpster. Mr. Martin recalled that Cemetery uses Highway's too. The Board suggested that the Board of Health Agent could issue interdepartmental billing. So the Agent can create a bill for each department for it and we can debit those department budgets and credit the revolving fund. Ms. Amodei felt this would make the most sense.

Interim Town Administrators Report

Mr. DeManche began by reporting on the budget and the motions for the Annual Town Meeting. We'll be printing copies of various documents for handouts. A meeting has also been held with the Town Moderator and other stakeholders to talk logistics and setup. We have a map for setup and we've been confirming with vendors to ensure we have chairs and tables. The Board asked about water. Mr. DeManche responded that the Fire Dept. will provide water like it did last year. We'll have a generator from the Police Dept. to support the sound system. Highway Dept. is also assisting with various items. Meanwhile he reported he's also obtained permission from Grange to use some of their tables and chairs in the event we don't have enough from the company we've rented from. Mr. Voelker interjected to note he posted the traditional pre-ATM meeting for the Board. The Board was pleased and asked about the time. He responded it is 10:15 am. Mr. DeManche then turned to work he's doing with NMCOG to utilize the resources we have with them. He was confident we'll get the project and some help and technical assistance. Mr. DeManche then turned to the quarterly ARPA report. There were some problems with the portal. This occurred for a number of municipalities. We're fine either way as we submitted the report by paper. We'll resubmit again digitally since they extended the due date. Mr. DeManche then turned to the tennis courts and the work being done by Parks Commission on that front. The current court needs work and is poses a Stormwater issue for us. So we need to address it. Mr. DeManche then reported on a call from Senator Kennedy's office. They're looking for ideas for earmarks and asked the Board if it had any ideas. The Board asked what the scope would be. Mr. DeManche wasn't certain as he received a message from Senator Kennedy's legislative aid. But he intended to call back in the next business day. Generally these earmarks are tied to specific projects. They look for things like improvements to operational efficiency or public safety. He promised more information on this after consultations with the Senators office. The Board suggested asking what the limit is too before the town goes too far down the path of plotting projects. It was then agreed that discussion be scheduled with Parks & Recreation about the possible combination of the commissions. The Board still wished to pursue that option.

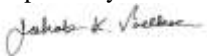
Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes for April 26th. The Board seeing no reason not to approve the minutes determined to do so and approved them as written.

A motion was made by Mr. Mikol to approve the minutes of April 26th, 2022 as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Meehan and passed without objection.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Meehan at 7:23 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by



Jakob K. Voelker, Assistant Town Administrator

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